



VICE PRESIDENT GORE ANNOUNCES OVER \$35 MILLION IN BROWNFIELDS GRANTS TO REVITALIZE CONTAMINATED PROPERTIES

Washington, D.C. -- Vice President Gore today awarded over \$35 million in grants to 102 communities across the country to clean up brownfields -- abandoned, lightly contaminated properties often found in economically distressed areas -- and return them to economically thriving, community hubs.

"The success of this Administration's efforts to revitalize brownfields clearly demonstrates that economic progress and the protection of our nation's environment work hand-in-hand," said Gore. "The grants that I am announcing today will provide even more communities with the tools they need to create new jobs and new opportunities, while preserving the environment for future generations."

The Clinton-Gore Administration today awarded 56 Brownfields Assessment Pilot Grants totaling over \$12 million to help these communities evaluate the environmental contamination of brownfield sites. With the help of these grants, state and local officials compile information that is then used to attract potential developers for the location. In addition, this year's assessment grants also include provisions for the evaluation, protection and preservation of "*green space*"-- parks, playgrounds, trails, gardens, habitat restoration, and open space -- on revitalized brownfield sites.

Today's announcement also includes \$20 million in Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund pilots for 30 grantees supporting 54 communities. These grants allow communities to establish revolving loan funds to provide businesses with low-interest loans to leverage funds for the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields. Awarded on a competitive basis, this funding allows communities that have demonstrated a commitment to the revitalization of brownfields through the use of a brownfields assessment grant to build upon their past successes.

In addition, 16 communities will receive job training grants, approximating \$200,000 each, for the implementation of environmental training programs. Totalling \$2.8 million this funding provides for the creation of workforce development programs to teach job skills in the field of environmental cleanup to individuals living in low income areas in the vicinity of brownfield sites. The majority of participants who successfully complete the training program go on to pursue careers with environmental firms and organizations.

"The Administration's brownfields revitalization efforts are experiencing unprecedented success," said U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol M. Browner. "With these new grants, even more communities will have the opportunity to experience economic growth and prosperity in areas where they need it most, while cleaning up the environment at the same time."

Since 1993, the Clinton-Gore Administration has taken significant steps to clean up brownfields and return them to productive use, awarding over \$157 million in grants to cities, counties, tribes, states, non-profits and educational institutions nationwide. According to an independent study conducted by

the Council for Economic Development, the revitalization of brownfields has created over 22,000 permanent jobs, and leveraged \$2.48 in private investment for every \$1 spent by federal, state, or local governments.

Today's announcement marks another step in the Clinton-Gore Administration's longstanding efforts to promote economic vitality, while protecting our nation's environment and safeguarding public health. With today's selection of recipients in Arkansas and Hawaii, brownfields revitalization efforts are now active in all 50 states for the first time ever.

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